
I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

1979 Growth Management Program

In 1979, the *Progress Guide and General Plan* established a growth management program to reverse the existing trend of rapid population and housing growth on the periphery of San Diego, and the declining growth in the central, older urbanized sections of the City. By 2000, full implementation of the strategy resulted in some success in the planned urbanizing area but the City's older urbanized communities and urban form had suffered the consequences. First, due in part to the passage of Proposition 13, no mechanism existed to finance the additional infrastructure necessary to support the additional development in the older, core neighborhoods. It was assumed that the existing infrastructure would meet the public facility needs required by the addition of higher density. Second, many of the new projects were multifamily and characterized by poor architectural design and site planning. The bulk, scale, and density of the new buildings were out of scale with the prevailing architectural character of many of the older, established neighborhoods. Consequently, the lack of infrastructure and prevalence of bad design engendered significant and lasting public opposition to multifamily development and density in general. Ultimately, reaction to the infill development prompted a new emphasis upon high quality design and community character and the adoption of new design regulations. Another reaction to the poor quality of the 1980's infill and infrastructure deficiencies was down-zonings to preserve single-family neighborhoods. In addition, the increase of construction defect litigation resulted in few developers interested in building attached unit for-sale projects.

Ultimately, construction of large, detached homes began to dominate the market as the century came to a close. This resulted in rapid consumption of the cheaper and easier to develop land around the periphery of the City, especially in North City. Throughout the 1990's, developers continued to build large subdivisions, comprising hundreds of acres and mostly detached homes, a development pattern characterized by sprawl. Such a development pattern makes an effective transit program difficult to implement, so much of the northern City is dependent on the automobile.

Increased demand for land in the North City led to the planning, and ultimately, a phase shift for the majority of the area designated for development in the 12,000-acre North City Future Urbanizing Area (NCFUA). The public's opposition to major roads crossing canyons, and desire to preserve over half of the area as an open space preserve resulted in a relatively low density development pattern over most of the City's urban reserve. The overall residential density is 2-3 dwelling units per acre. The guiding land use principles adopted for the developable land in the NCFUA, however, required pedestrian oriented design for residential and commercial areas, affordable housing, mixed-use neighborhood centers, and more sensitive grading techniques.

Land redesignation and down-zonings around the City, especially along the Interstate 15 corridor, have resulted in the loss of thousands of units previously anticipated in the

Progress Guide and General Plan and community plans. Additional factors also impacted the unit yield around the City and region.

Open Space Planning and MSCP

The City and region have made significant strides with respect to open space preservation. As the 1990's began, San Diegans continued to express concerns regarding the lack of comprehensive open space planning and preservation within the City and throughout the region, and the failure of existing regulations to protect sensitive habitat and land form. Interconnected habitat preservation areas had not been clearly identified, and serious deficiencies in open space management and acquisition funding existed. Habitat preservation occurred on an ad hoc, project-by-project basis, and was scattered around the City.

During the first half of the decade the City engaged in a comprehensive habitat planning program, the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), to establish an interconnected open space preserve throughout the City and region. The MSCP established a planned habitat preserve area, the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), and a specific set of regulations for development adjacent to (and to a limited extent within) the preserve, and developed a funding strategy to acquire key parcels of land.

Housing Yield Decrease Associated with Implementation of City's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Plan

Implementation of the MSCP plan includes assembling a 52,000-acre planned habitat preserve, the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA). Placement of land into this MHPA involved the redesignation of land designated for urban uses to open space. The MSCP plan envisioned that the conversion of land from urban uses to open space, which resulted in a loss of planned housing units, would be replaced in other less sensitive areas. The anticipated land use impacts associated with implementation of the MHPA were analyzed in the joint EIR/EIS for the MSCP program prepared by the City of San Diego, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Game. A summary of land use changes and estimated losses in dwelling units associated with implementation of the MSCP Plan is presented in Table I-1.

As shown in Table I-1 the loss of housing units associated with implementation of the MSCP program affected the Carmel Valley, East Elliot, Rancho Penasquitos and Otay Mesa community plans. The joint MSCP EIR/EIS concluded that within the communities of Carmel Valley, Otay Mesa, and Rancho Penasquitos, the proposed project would require the reallocation of planned housing units to other sites within the respective plan area, or elsewhere in the City. Within the Carmel Valley Community Plan, the EIR/EIS anticipated that adequate low-density housing opportunities remained despite the overall reduction in land designated for urban uses. The EIR/EIS determined that Otay Mesa retained an adequate amount of residentially designated land (approximately 1,237 acres) after MHPA delineation. Previously developable area placed into the preserve, however, represented a significant portion of the remaining land within the City of San Diego where most affordable, attached homes could have been built. The open space areas associated with the

MSCP in the Rancho Penasquitos Community Plan provided a connection to an important, regional open space resource, Black Mountain Park. The EIR/EIS determined that the loss of 7% of the planning area's residential acres did not represent a substantial reduction in housing availability.

Adoption of the MSCP also resulted in the loss of residential land in East Elliott. The EIR/EIS concluded that open space uses were more compatible than residential uses adjacent to an existing and planned landfill in that community. Additionally, the City adopted an alternative to allow for some residential uses to remain in the far eastern portion of East Elliott, adjacent to existing utilities and services in the City of Santee.

Table I-1
Estimated Land Use Changes within City of San Diego
Community Plan Areas with Implementation of MSCP Plan

Community Plan	Acres Converted From Urban Uses to Open Space	Loss in Number of Planned Housing Units
Carmel Valley	+172	-1,150
North City Future Urbanizing Area	+68	0
Rancho Penasquitos	+206	-800
East Elliott	+271	-1,200
Otay Mesa	+903	-3,379
Tijuana River Valley	+2,141	0
TOTALS	+3,761	-6,529

Source: City of San Diego, 1996

Potential Housing Decrease Associated with Planned Mid-City Schools

Funded by the passage of Proposition MM, San Diego City Schools has started siting and designing elementary schools throughout the Mid-City communities. In many instances, the construction of new schools would displace existing dwelling units. The number of units, which could be displaced, was estimated based on the school district's Notice of Preparation of EIRs and from the subsequent distributed draft EIRs. These new schools could result in the loss of 606 to 1080 units depending on the school sites selected Table lists the new schools, the preferred and alternative locations and the resultant housing loss. This loss is either number of existing dwelling units where available, or the potential yield of the site based on the size of the project site and its zoning.

Table I-2
Potential Housing Decrease With Planned Schools
San Diego City Schools

SCHOOL SITE	NUMBER OF DU'S DISPLACED	POTENTIAL YIELD (DU's)
Edison/Hamilton/Parks Elementary		
NOP: September, 2000		
Preferred Site - SE of Myrtle and 42 nd	145	--
Alternative Site #1- SE of Thorn and 39 th	73	--
Alternative Site #2 - NE of Myrtle and 46 th	84	--
Sherman Area Elementary		
NOP: January, 2001		
Preferred Site - SE of Commercial and 21 st	NA	(96)
Alternative Site - Northeast of J St and 14 th	NA	(96)
King/Logan/Perkins Elementary		
NOP: November, 2000		
Preferred Site - NE of Logan at 31 st	NA	(96)
Alternative Site - NE of Franklin and 29 th	NA	(96)
Winona Ave Area Elementary		
EIR: SCH No.1999081146		--
Preferred Site - NE of Orange at Estrella	210	--
Central Area Elementary		
EIR: SCH No. 1999101113		
Preferred Site - SE of Wrightman and 38 th	131	--
Alternative Site #1 - SE of Wrightman and Cherokee	86	--
Alternative Site #2 - NW of Dwight and 41 st	51	--
Alternative Site #3 - SE of Polk and 38 th	171	--
Alternative Site #4 - NW of Polk and Marlborough	249	--
52nd Street Area Elementary		
EIR: SCH No. 1999101128		
Preferred Site - SE of Orange and Altadena	210	--
Alternative Site #1- NW of University and 52 nd	159	--
Alternative Site #2 - Rex and 52 nd	45	--
Alternative Site #3 - NE of Polk and Altadena	178	--
Brooklyn-Kimbrough Elementary		
EIR: SCH No. 1999101113		
Preferred Site - SE of E St. and 27 th	74	--
Alternative Site #1 - NE of C St. and 32 nd	35	--
Alternative Site #2 - SE of E St and 27 th	59	--

Transit and Regional Planning

Of course, loss of housing opportunities and the other challenges mentioned above affect not only the City of San Diego, but also the entire region. Over the past few years SANDAG, the regional planning agency, and other local governments and agencies have engaged in planning for the region's growth and development to address these issues.

SANDAG has adopted Region 2020, a growth management strategy, to address the negative effects of sprawl and to attempt to create livable, sustainable communities. The strategy calls for directing the region's future growth into more urban areas, and encourages an increase in mixed-use development. It emphasizes five interdependent regional issues: economic prosperity and adding high value jobs; increasing the amount and type of housing supply and siting adjacent to transit, jobs, and services; designing and implementing transit systems; open space preservation, resource protection, and alternative energy sources; and fiscal reform to increase local governments' budgetary control. The Strategic Framework Element is an outgrowth of this set of smart growth planning principles. Region 2020 will also set the foundation for a more comprehensive regional plan.

Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB) - "Transit First"

In October 2000, the MTDB Board of Directors adopted the Transit First Vision, as a bold statement of strategy on the role transit will play in the MTDB area over the next 20 years and beyond. "Transit First" is designed to make transit such a desirable option that people will make it their first choice for many of their daily travel needs. It was conceptually consistent with the vision statements in the SANDAG's Region 2020 planning process (currently under revision) and is endorsed in the City's proposed Strategic Framework Element. The adoption of a Transit First policy direction by MTDB is the result of a two-year effort in preparing a strategic plan for transit improvements in the region. The board's action sends a signal of its support for making significant improvements in the transit system; improvements that require land use coordination in order to provide the land use, intensities, and designs essential to making the improved transit system work. The Transit First Station is an integral part of the City of Villages strategy, as well as SANDAG's regional transportation planning efforts.

Ridership Increases

The new transit vision was developed through a market-based, strategic planning development program, that considered key attitudes and perceptions which influence a person's decision on using public transit over a personal vehicle. Key factors which were found to determine propensity to use transit included the sensitivity to the transit rider's personal travel experience and the traveler's need for flexibility and speed. This information was used to identify the plan's four-service concepts which include: Green Car (Community-level), Blue Car (short distance trips), Red Car (medium distance trips), and Yellow Car (longer distance trips). The resulting expanded and improved transit service would become a viable travel option for most people throughout the region. This would be especially true for the urbanized core within the City as it redevelops per the proposed City of Villages strategy. Riding public transit would become more of an option to a large

group of residents because a wider variety of services would be offered with a range of amenities and a set of service attributes that more closely matches people's travel needs.

The proposed City of Villages strategy has the potential to result in more destinations to walk to since retail commercial, employment centers, and public gathering places would be located in attractive mixed-use village centers, either close enough to walk or bike to or easily reached by transit. Most people would still own an automobile and some households may still find it necessary to have multiple cars. However, people would no longer need to rely upon personal vehicles for every trip, and many households may no longer require multiple cars; expanded and improved transit would become their auxiliary vehicle.

The target market for transit ridership would be shifted from least demanding transit riders, the current riders, to include new riders who have a high need for travel flexibility and speed and a perception of security, but have a medium level of sensitivity to their personal travel experience. It is estimated that these potential transit riders comprise 89% of the local population. The only persons not expected to be attracted to this improved public transportation system, are persons with higher disposable income and with the highest need for travel flexibility and speed and high sensitivity to their personal travel experience. They will continue to use their personal vehicles. However, it is estimated that even these people would make up 5% of local transit riders when the system becomes more attractive and useful.

The envisioned improved transit service is expected to result in significant gains. The expanded/improved "world class" transit would become a realistic transportation choice for the majority of the region's residents.

Red and Yellow Car Routes

A proposed improved system of Red and Yellow Car core routes is expected to focus on maintaining a high level of regional connectivity during commute periods with a service frequency approaching 10-minute intervals. The current light rail trolley lines will be refurbished and extended, and many other areas will receive the benefits of "trolley-like" service, with vehicles that resemble light rail but which utilize rubber-tired technology. These "flex trolleys" and regular trolleys would work together as a single Red Car system, while similar flex trolleys operating as rapid Yellow Car services on the freeway system are planned to carry commuters across many stretches of the region on trips that were not practical by public transportation before. Fares are expected to be higher on these premium services, but so are their frequency and reliability. These fast services would be given priority in congested areas, and the transit vehicles and stops offer not just a high degree of comfort and security, but their design and configuration should be popular with the targeted market segments. Rapid transit would serve major work locations such as Downtown, Kearny Mesa, Sorrento Mesa, Otay Mesa, and the Golden Triangle from most parts of the region.

Blue and Green Car Routes

A rich mixture of Green Car (shuttle) services would supplement the Red and Yellow car route, tying even more people into the regional network. In addition to these new and/or

improved transit modes, an improved network of Blue Car (current buses) services would offer a high level of basic coverage throughout the day. These buses would serve not just the needs of transit dependents but also those who find the convenience of such routes useful.

The envisioned new transit services would be focused on key employment centers, particularly where congestion impedes the ability of employees to get to work. For other than home-to-work trips, the new services would focus directly on areas that will have redeveloped consistent with the City of Villages strategy. These villages and corridors would have enhanced transit potential since a high percentage of residents living in higher density attached homes, would be within walking distance of transit services. Other adjoining areas with lower density land-use areas would also be within walking distance of the improved public transportation centers and corridors.

Future Travel Experience

If Transit First is implemented, the future customer travel experience will be greatly enhanced. Most proposed Red Car and Yellow Car services would be “rail-like” in their feel and look. Transit stops will include improved passenger amenities such as real-time information, shelters, landscaping, and lighting to create more focus on transit in the community. Significant improvements would be made to the walking environment to transit, particularly in the village centers. The design of the sidewalk environment would be oriented and landscaped to create a pleasant and safe walk to transit. All stops would have hardscape and landscape design elements that make transit a focal point of activity within the community.

The proposed expanded network of Yellow Car and Red Car services would provide a high level of service and regional connectivity throughout the day. Green Car shuttle service would extend the range of all services, and Blue Car bus service would continue to operate in those corridors and areas where ridership does not justify the development of other services, thus preserving the basic mobility network. A minimum 10-minute service frequency standard would eventually become the standard for all service types throughout the day so that waiting times would no longer be a barrier for most potential transit riders. Late evening and night owl service, while less frequent, will eventually be expanded to make travel by transit possible throughout the region around the clock.

Phasing of Implementation

In the short term, emphasis will be placed on rapid expansion of service to all major demand markets with lower-capital improvements. A possible example is a direct, faster connection between Downtown and Fashion Valley through Banker’s Hill and Hillcrest. In the longer term, higher capital investment upgrades are expected to maximize system speed through extensive use of transit priority measures and dedicated infrastructure. Short overpasses and tunnels would allow transit vehicles and even surface traffic to avoid the congestion that is common in certain areas. A higher degree of land-use coordination affords the opportunity to integrate transit into community design, giving transit a front-door entrance into major developments similar to that achieved at the Downtown America

Plaza Transfer Station. The goal of this transit planning and implementation is a superior customer experience.

Conclusion

San Diego has almost reached its current plan build-out, with the exception of Otay Mesa in the southern portion of the City. The immediate and future outstanding urban form challenge is how to plan for and redirect growth to enhance quality of life, provide more diverse and affordable housing choices, encourage a more efficient use of redeveloped land, support an expanded transit system, and invite communities to walk and interact. This planning task is further challenged by the citizens' expressed desire to preserve the existing character of the older, established neighborhoods and, add or enhance the character of the City's newer developments. The new strategy for growth and development must also address how to provide the open space and transportation linkages to create a firm structure for the City as a whole, while maintaining, if not, enhancing the diverse character of its individual neighborhoods, and distinctive natural land form.

B. Goals and Objectives

Recent preliminary regional population growth projections show that the City of San Diego would add to its current population of nearly 1.3 million, an additional 200,000 persons by the year 2020. It has been estimated that the reasonable yield allowed by the existing plan and zone would fall approximately 17,000 dwelling units short of accommodating the projected additional 200,000 people. Based on previous projections, it was initially estimated that the City would need an additional 50,000 units; SANDAG reduced the need based upon more accurate 2000 Census numbers. This estimated 17,000-unit shortfall in dwelling units to meet future demand is the need addressed by this proposed project, the City of Village strategy for growth and development.

Future Vision

The goals and objective of the proposed project is to formulate a future vision for the City of San Diego as it shifts from building out on all available raw land to a second phase of development emphasizing infill and redevelopment, where a residential component is added to existing or new commercial development. This second phase of growth presents an opportunity to redress problems engendered by the City's previous growth pattern. The City through its vision statement and blueprint for development, an updated General Plan, can proactively direct growth into strategic locations, namely village centers and transit corridors of mixed-uses, instead of fostering a less-controlled, outward "sprawl" pattern of development.

The proposed resultant intensification in potential villages and corridors could bring a direct benefit of enhancing the City's ability to support a much-improved public transit system, MTDB's Transit First concept. Another less direct, but nonetheless important regional goal/benefit, could be the relieving development pressures on the remaining privately-owned area designated for habitat preserve by the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), specifically, the City's Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), as well as on the remaining, undeveloped portions of the unincorporated backcountry in eastern San Diego County. In addition, the proposed City of Villages growth strategy, if fully implemented with targeted, mixed-use intensification and served by a world-class transit system, presents the possibility for long-term, positive effects on regional issues such as freeway congestion and air quality.

Housing Needs-Range of Housing Affordability and Housing Types

Housing product types developed to date have not necessarily met the demographic needs of San Diego. San Diego has a young population with approximately 56 percent of its residents less than 35 years old. These and other demographics suggest a need for attached rental housing with units of more than two bedrooms to accommodate lower income families, as well as a need for entry level for-sale multifamily or single family housing for first-time home buyers. Accessible housing options for persons with disabilities also need to be considered. Recent residential development has been geared toward upper-end single-family types of housing in the North City area and multifamily units in downtown.

The challenge to meet this expressed need for additional dwelling units is further complicated by the persisting need for affordable housing and associated current lack of availability of a diverse range of housing types. A number of issues impact San Diegans' access to housing, including the national and local economy, as well as local supply and demand. High economic growth periods tend to negatively impact most income level groups' ability to find housing because of market demand. For lower income households, affordable housing is generally unavailable, especially during high economic growth periods.

The late 1980s and late 1990s represented periods of economic growth nationwide and in San Diego. The 1999 rental vacancy rate for the City was estimated to be extremely low (1% to 3%). In 1998, the National Association of Homebuilders ranked San Diego as the 15th least affordable homeowner market in the country. In 1998, only about 25 percent of San Diego households could afford the median priced home of \$215,000. For comparison, in 1994, the median was \$181,500 and this price was affordable to 40% of the households.

These trends are not unique to San Diego. Nationwide, the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development reports that the number of houses and apartments that families with low-wage incomes can afford is decreasing. Affordable housing opportunities are shrinking, with rents rising at twice the rate of general inflation (1999), and the number of people with low-income jobs increasing. The decline in federal and local assistance for rent and income restricted housing units has also resulted in fewer units affordable to low income households.

Coupled with the increased demand for housing created by economic growth is the reduction of supply through current land use designations. Over the last 20 years, San Diego's residential development has become more homogeneous, resulting in a lack of housing types affordable to different income levels. The trend of not developing at the maximum density allowed, or rezoning to lower densities to allow more detached homes has reduced the potential housing stock in the City. As mentioned earlier, this pattern of development has created a mismatch in housing needs and housing types, as well as created other costs for consumers.

Diverse Communities

Another consideration is the increasing longevity and the housing needs for a maturing population. SANDAG estimates that throughout San Diego County, the number of people 65 years and older will increase significantly over the next 20 years. In the City of San Diego, people 65 years and older currently 11% of the population will increase to 14% in 2020. In addition, people between the ages of 55 to 64 years are also expected to increase from 7% to 12% during this period. These are the people who may currently own detached dwelling units in which they were raising a family, and who in 20 years, may not need and/or want to continue to live in a large, detached home. These future mature citizens may wish to transfer their homes to their grown children who may need these larger, detached homes to raise their own family. In addition, these mature citizens may wish to live independently but also remain in the same community closer to family, in a more convenient, lower maintenance, and possibly smaller attached home. This opportunity to

accommodate future life style possibilities may be presented by the proposed intensification of mixed-use village centers served by an improved public transit system envisioned by the proposed City of Villages. The potential synergy of this potential future scenario is added stability as well as added diversity to the community.

Challenges to creating new housing units in San Diego include land availability, financing, traffic constraints, and environmental impacts. San Diego's vacant, developable land continues to diminish; new housing units would occur through infill or redevelopment and would mainly be attached units. Infill and redevelopment create a challenge in increasing the housing stock because both development costs and neighborhood concerns are higher in existing communities. In addition, construction defect litigation, rising construction costs, and other financial feasibility issues have deterred the development of condominiums and apartments.

Economic/Social Issues

The City of Villages vision includes a new strategy, which focuses on the long-term economic health of the City, by including policies which address the changing structure of our economy. The "hourglass economy" has created the need to focus on equity rather than economic growth alone. San Diego has also become increasingly multicultural as reflected in the City's arts and culture, architecture, and the social fabric of the hundreds of neighborhoods that comprise the City. Both of these factors require the provision of equitable educational opportunities, the creation and maintenance of middle-income jobs, and a more equitable distribution of the of needed public facilities and services, and are all goals of the strategy. As the availability of employment land decreases, a more efficient use of remaining land is necessary while balancing the overall needs of both residential and employment growth. The global economy also requires a more proactive approach to regional and border planning issues.

C. Content of the EIR and Notice of Preparation

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared in compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 as amended (Public Resources Code '21000 et seq.), the State of California CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, '15000 et seq.) and the City of San Diego Guidelines and Format for Environmental Impact Reports (June 1992). The City of San Diego is the lead agency for the proposed project, pursuant to Article 4 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This document is intended for use by City of San Diego decision makers, other responsible or interested agencies and the general public in evaluating the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. The EIR presents information concerning the potential environmental impacts involving the proposed City of Villages, the Strategic Framework Element, an amendment to the Progress Guide and General Plan.

This EIR evaluates the potentially significant environmental issues as determined by the City of San Diego during the Initial Study process. In accordance with section 15060 of the CEQA Guidelines, a preliminary review of the project indicated that an EIR would be required. Consequently, a formal initial study was not prepared. The City found that due to

the proposed project there may be potentially significant effects related to: land use, transportation/circulation, neighborhood character and aesthetics, air quality, public services, utilities, water quality, hydrology, noise, geologic hazards, human health and safety, paleontological resources and historical resources.

For each issue, the EIR contains a discussion of existing conditions, potential impacts, an analysis of significance of the impact and proposed mitigation measures for those impacts identified as significant. Growth Inducement is discussed in Chapter V, Cumulative Impacts are addressed in Chapter VI, other CEQA Mandatory Discussion Areas are discussed in Chapter VII, and Alternatives to the Project are provided in Chapter VIII.

Discretionary actions addressed by this EIR include City Council adoption of the proposed Strategic Framework Element for inclusion in the City's Progress Guide and General Plan and the Strategic Framework Five-Year Action Plan and the application of the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Guidelines as an overlay on the potential village centers to address transit access and walkability. The proposed growth strategy would replace the current Guidelines for Future Development chapter in the Progress Guide and General Plan. This project would be initially considered at a public hearing of the Planning Commission. Recommendations of the Planning Commission will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration and final (Process 5) decision. As the Lead Agency, the City of San Diego circulated a Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report to numerous interested agencies in June 2001, requesting comments on the scope of the EIR. The issues the City found to be potentially significant were identified in the Scope of Work attached to the distributed Notice of Preparation.

A copy of the distributed NOP and public comment letters are contained in the Attachment 1 to this EIR.

D. Responsible and Trustee Agencies

There are no known responsible agencies for this project and no federal funds are being used for the preparation of this project. Potential trustee agencies include State Air Resources Board, San Diego Air Pollution Control District, Regional Water Quality Control Board, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and California Department of Fish and Game.

E. Scope of the EIR

The EIR addresses a General Plan policy proposal, a proposed strategy for growth and development. However, any required, subsequent amendment of the adopted land use plans or discretionary actions to implement this current proposed City of Villages, are not covered in this initial CEQA document.

This document is a Draft Programmatic EIR that will approach this project on both a citywide and regionwide basis. As related to the regionwide condition, this subject EIR for the proposed Strategic Framework Element and Five-Year Action Plan, includes environmental analysis of an additional 17,000 to 37,000 dwelling units needed to support

the projected City of San Diego population growth based upon regional population projections for the year 2020 and beyond. This increase in dwelling units for the City would affect a range of environmental issues on a region-wide basis including traffic/circulation, air quality, water supply, sewerage, solid waste and schools. This analysis required consultation with SANDAG, the Metropolitan Transportation Development Board (MTDB), the County Water Authority (CWA), and the Air Pollution Control District (APCD).

Overall, the content of the DEIR will include a project description, environmental setting, environmental analysis, analysis of cumulative impacts, growth inducement, effects found not to be significant, unavoidable and irreversible significant environmental effects caused by the project, and project alternatives. Project alternatives will potentially address other options for managing growth and development within the City, instead of, or in combination with the "City of Villages" concept, including that of the "No Project" alternative. The No Project alternative will result in utilization of the existing General Plan with its existing Elements.

F. Uses of this EIR

Environmental Impact Reports are informational documents intended to inform public decision makers, other responsible or interested agencies, and the general public of the significant environmental effects of a proposed project. The purpose of this EIR is to provide information regarding environmental consequences and constraints of the proposed project, and to identify the possible alternatives to the proposal that would avoid or lessen the significant impacts.

Adoption of the proposed Strategic Framework Element for inclusion in the City's *Progress Guide and General Plan* and the Strategic Framework Five-Year Action Plan by the City Council (Process 5) will require environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The public hearing at City Council will occur following a recommendation made by the City's Planning Commission, to approve or deny adoption of the proposed project.

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) addresses the initial phase of the City of Villages project, the adoption of the General Plan Element and the Action Plan and the placement of the TOD Design Guidelines over the potential village centers, in accordance with CEQA. The analysis contained in this initial environmental document has been directed towards the regional or citywide environmental effects of the resultant proposed land use intensifications. In addition, this EIR adequately addresses cumulative impacts, project alternatives, and growth inducement, and identifies effects found not to be significant and unavoidable and irreversible significant environmental effects caused by the project. This initial document would allow the selection of several specific pilot village locations for further design refinements, and establishes the basis for subsequent, more site-specific environmental review.

Upon selection of several specific pilot village locations, a subsequent Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR) could be prepared for subsequent, implementation

of this proposed City of Villages strategy in accordance with CEQA Section 21157 (a)(1) which states, "A master environmental impact report may be prepared for any one of the following projects: A general plan, element, general plan amendment, or specific plan." This MEIR would rely by reference upon the regional, citywide analysis addressed in the previous Programmatic EIR including all CEQA-required analysis within an EIR. All subsequent implementing actions of the previously adopted Strategic Framework Element and Five-Year Action Plan would require some form of additional "action-specific" or "community/site-specific" environmental review as they occur. These subsequent actions may also require varying types of discretionary permits or approvals, and permits from other state and federal agencies as they occur. If the City, as lead agency, determines that a proposed subsequent project would have no additional significant effects on the environment than what was identified in the MEIR (and the referenced previous, initial Programmatic EIR) and that no new or additional mitigation measures or alternatives would be required, the lead agency would make a written finding that the project is within the scope of the MEIR. The previously certified MEIR and its referenced Programmatic EIR is intended to relieve the need for a third level EIR for subsequent actions and/or development implementing the proposed City of Villages and strives to minimize the extent of the subsequent environmental review needed for the ultimate implementation.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City of San Diego covers nearly 330 square miles and is located in the southwestern corner of California. (Refer to Figure 1 for the relative location and Figure 2 for the proposed City of Villages.) Much of the City is situated in the coastal plain portion of southwestern San Diego County. This coastal plain is not a continuous, flat landform. It slopes gently upwards to the eastern foothills and has been eroded into separate mesas. The coastal plain has been incised by numerous side canyons flowing into major drainages that generally flow westward towards the coast. These major drainages from the northern portion of the City to the south are the San Dieguito River, Penasquitos Canyon, Carroll Canyon, Rose Canyon, San Diego River, Los Chollas Creek, Sweetwater River, Otay River, and the westernmost mouth of the Tijuana River.

While east-west canyons and valleys divide the coastal plain into north-south components, three marine terraces separate the coastal plain into three platform mesas. Each terrace steps up in elevation towards the inland foothills. Closest to the coast at elevations of 50 feet to 70 feet above mean sea level (MSL) is the La Jolla Terrace. Further east at elevations of 300 feet to 500 feet (MSL) is the Linda Vista Terrace. The Linda Vista Terrace is the largest and contains such "mesa" communities as Mira Mesa, Kearny Mesa, Serra Mesa, Otay Mesa, and Clairemont Mesa. The majority of the third terrace, the Poway Terrace, has been eroded away and is no longer a distinct landform. These terraces were formed by ocean wave-cut action during the last 2.5 million years with the changes in sea levels associated with the cyclic growth and contraction of the polar ice caps. A geologic uplift of the coastal area in conjunction with sea level changes also aided in the formation of these terraces. Bordered by the Pacific Ocean to the west and the coastal mountains 20 miles inland, the coastal plain of metropolitan San Diego is sufficiently fragmented into large mesas such that each mesa can be classed as a specific geographic area.

Consequently, each large mesa has developed into unique communities separated and physically bounded by distinct natural barriers, the major east-west canyons. While development has occurred in Mission Valley and portions of other drainages, efforts to provide open space and reduce land use intensity in San Dieguito River Valley, Penasquitos Canyon, San Clemente Canyon, and the Otay River Valley will allow the City of San Diego an opportunity to retain and/or develop unique communities with distinct physical separation. Level land, land with slope of 12 percent or less, considered most suitable for development comprises 40 percent of the metropolitan area. Very steep hillsides and canyons, land traditionally less suitable for development, comprises 30 percent of the area. The remaining 30 percent comprises areas with slopes between 12 percent to 25 percent.

Please refer to each of the issue discussion sections in this document for more specific environmental settings.

Population Trends

Development of the San Diego metropolitan area during the 1990's was characterized by an overall growth rate of about 1%. During the past decade, the population in the City of

San Diego increased by 9.4%. The rate of growth in the City as well as the region was about one-third of the higher rate of the previous decade, the 1980's. While the rate has slowed, the growth experienced in the region, combined with continued dependence on passenger car travel and longer commutes, have resulted in continued traffic congestion. The higher rate of increase in vehicle travel miles than population continues to occur; this can be attributed to the predominance of two-worker households. This has resulted in an increase of weekday peak-hour trips.

Table II-1 compares the population growth in the 1990's within the City of San Diego by community plans. Comparison of 1990 and 2000 Census data shows that some areas such as the coastal communities of Torrey Pines, Ocean Beach, and Mission Beach experienced a drop in populations. Other areas with population decreases include long-established, built-out communities of Barrio Logan, Clairemont Mesa, Navajo, and Serra Mesa.

Additionally, closure of the Naval Training Center contributed to a significant population decrease occurred in the Peninsula Community Plan Area (includes Pt. Loma). Significantly increasing faster than the City's overall rate were communities that built out during the past decade, Carmel Mountain Ranch, Sabre Springs, Scripps Miramar Ranch, and Miramar Ranch North. Also, increasing at a faster rate and showing significant numeric gains were the communities of City Heights, Rancho Penasquitos, University City, and Mira Mesa. Centre City and the communities in the western portion of North City, Otay Mesa, and Mission Valley, experienced the highest rate of growth and are expected to continue to grow faster than the citywide rate. The table also shows the 2020 population projection for selected communities to give a general indication of expected growth rates and patterns. Please note that SANDAG is currently revising the 2020 projection and the population numbers for these communities will change and that the proposed City of Villages strategy will refine SANDAG's projections based upon community input and other development constraints.

**Table II-1
Population Data**

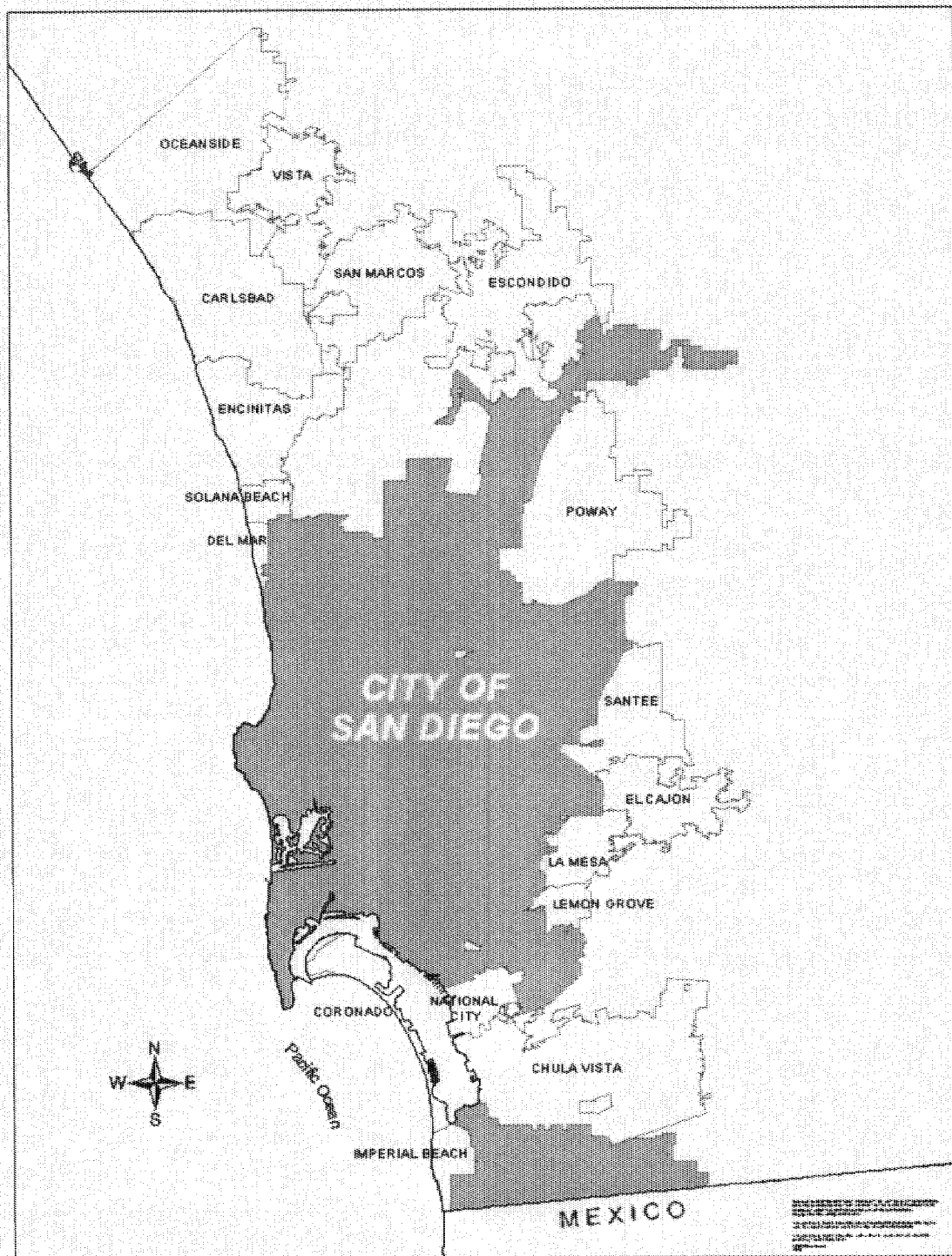
Community Plan Area	1990 Census	Census 2000 Preliminary Estimates	1990 to 2000 % Change	2020 SANDAG Forecast*	2000 to 2020 % Change
Balboa Park	1,366	1,159	-15.2%	1,200	3.5%
Barrio Logan	4,579	3,636	-20.6%	8,200	125.5%
Beeler Canyon	19	35	84.2%	200	471.4%
Carmel Mountain Ranch	6,920	12,271	77.3%	12,100	-1.4%
Carmel Valley	11,471	25,248	120.1%	41,500	64.4%
Centre City	14,785	17,513	18.5%	50,300	187.2%
City Heights	67,058	78,843	17.6%	80,800	2.5%
Clairemont Mesa	77,976	78,310	0.4%	86,500	10.5%
College Area	18,909	20,388	7.8%	25,000	22.6%
Del Mar Mesa	36	52	44.4%	3,100	5861.5%
East Elliott	0	0	0.0%	1,000	0.0%
Eastern Area	32,182	36,331	12.9%	36,600	0.7%
Fairbanks Ranch CC	924	893	-3.4%	1,000	12.0%
Flower Hill	0	0	0.0%	8	0.0%
Greater Golden Hill	18,032	17,955	-0.4%	21,600	20.3%
Greater North Park	44,696	46,665	4.4%	56,100	20.2%
Harbor	2,235	63	-97.2%	4,500	7042.9%
Kearny Mesa	1,000	3,628	262.8%	2,600	-28.3%
Kensington - Talmadge	13,595	14,071	3.5%	16,900	20.1%
La Jolla	28,532	29,078	1.9%	32,600	12.1%
Linda Vista	30,774	31,681	2.9%	41,800	31.9%
Lindbergh Field	1,954	4,531	131.9%	2,300	-49.2%
Midway - Pac. Hwy	3,977	4,389	10.4%	6,700	52.7%
Mira Mesa	57,275	72,005	25.7%	115,000	59.7%
Miramar MCAS	3,087	6,470	109.6%	4,300	-33.5%
Miramar Ranch North	6	8,657	144183.3%	14,200	64.0%
Mission Bay	1,071	884	-17.5%	600	-32.1%
Mission Beach	5,740	5,168	-10.0%	6,300	21.9%
Mission Valley	8,170	12,017	47.1%	24,300	102.2%
Navajo	49,722	47,562	-4.3%	56,300	18.4%
Nestor	60,627	61,415	1.3%	70,600	15.0%
Normal Heights	15,575	17,165	10.2%	17,100	-0.4%
North City FUA	1,224	330	-73.0%	29,900	8960.6%
Ocean Beach	13,392	13,331	-0.5%	14,400	8.0%
Old San Diego	815	752	-7.7%	1,900	152.7%
Otay Mesa	262	1,740	564.1%	105,300	5951.7%
Pacific Beach	38,824	40,296	3.8%	43,600	8.2%
Penasquitos Canyon	3	51	1600.0%	0	-100.0%
Peninsula	44,331	37,755	-14.8%	46,800	24.0%
Rancho Bernardo	34,479	39,058	13.3%	43,700	11.9%
Rancho Penasquitos	40,716	48,028	18.0%	54,100	12.6%
Sabre Springs	1,794	8,194	356.7%	15,200	85.5%
San Pasqual	426	377	-11.5%	400	6.1%
San Ysidro	24,839	26,953	8.5%	36,700	36.2%
Scripps Miramar	16,649	19,342	16.2%	22,100	14.3%
Serra Mesa	23,468	22,873	-2.5%	25,100	9.7%
Skyline-Paradise Hills	66,971	69,207	3.3%	78,000	12.7%
Sorrento Hills		1,907		5,400	183.2%
Southeastern San Diego	97,781	104,877	7.3%	153,600	46.5%
Tierrasanta	29,171	30,203	3.5%	32,500	7.6%
Tijuana River Valley	120	86	-28.3%	100	16.3%
Torrey Highlands	138	89	-35.5%	8,400	9338.2%
Torrey Pines	6,842	6,805	-0.5%	7,400	8.7%
University	42,717	49,701	16.3%	65,000	30.8%
Uptown	35,216	35,772	1.6%	54,600	52.6%
Via de la Valle	189	451	138.6%	500	10.9%
32nd St Naval Station	7,889	7,139	-9.5%	4,900	-31.4%
City of San Diego	1,110,549	1,223,400	10.2%	1,693,500	38.4%

* Selected Population numbers from 2020 SANDAG Regionwide Forecast currently undergoing revisions

NOTE: The COV Strategy will refine SANDAG projections based upon community input and other development constraints.

Source: San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

Figure 1
Location Map – City of San Diego



III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Major Project Features - Strategic Framework Element (SFE)

The proposed City of Villages, the Strategic Framework Element, would replace the existing chapter "Guidelines for Future Development" (adopted in 1990) within the City of San Diego *Progress Guide and General Plan*. The Guidelines for Future Development mainly addressed the buildout of vacant land within the City. However, less than ten percent of the City's 331 square miles is currently available for new development, and many of these adopted guidelines have become obsolete. The proposed Strategic Framework Element provides a long-term strategy to address the City's forecasted population growth and development needs, predominately through effective and innovative redevelopment and infill.

Overall, the Strategic Framework Element is designed to guide the update of the entire 1979 *Progress Guide and General Plan* and, where necessary, the City's 43 community plans (the Land Use Element of the *Progress Guide and General Plan*) through 2020. These subsequent updates would provide for the necessary zoning changes and other legal requirements to implement a new growth and development strategy outlined in this proposed Element. Based on an extensive outreach program initiated by the City during the past two years, the preferred growth and development strategy to be implemented by this Element has been termed "A City of Villages." For this analysis, the terms, "the proposal", "the City of Villages", "SFE" or simply "the strategy" are synonymous with the proposed project.

The proposed City of Villages strategy embraces a loosely defined term "village" as a place where residential, commercial, employment and civic/education uses are integrated. These villages would be pedestrian-friendly and have inviting open spaces and places for community events. They will offer a variety of housing types at a range of densities connected by an expanded and improved public transit system to create a cohesive City. Downtown San Diego, the Centre City, would remain the regional center with its transit hub, major cultural and institutional facilities, convention and visitor attractions, retail and entertainment opportunities, and prominent public and civic space. Opportunities to further increase employment intensities and residential densities in the Centre City to take advantage of its many amenities will be explored. The intent of the City of Villages proposal is to create subregional and more localized centers. These proposed centers range from subregional districts to urban centers to neighborhood centers. An existing subregional district is Mission Valley where further employment and residential intensification would be encouraged by the proposed strategy. The proposed centers will include a mix of land uses, significant public spaces, and a variety of attached housing types at relatively higher densities. Efficient, improved and/or expanded transit service is an essential component of the proposed village design. Ultimate village design locations

will be coordinated with the concurrent strategic transit effort by MTDB, Transit First. The proposal would apply the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) guidelines for each proposed center location, as identified on the Fourth Revised Version of the City of Villages Map, as an interim measure until community plans can be amended to locate centers more definitely and include associated design standards to implement the strategy. The TOD guidelines will not supercede community plan land use and density recommendations. A full range of public facilities would be required and phased in for each community in which a village center is envisioned. Existing and planned transit corridors would also be proposed for mixed-use intensification. This strategy is designed to focus growth when and if it occurs. As growth does occur over the next 10, 20 or 50 years, the proposed village design concept would enable growth to be located in such a way that the quality of life for City residents, is as a minimum maintained, if not improved.

The City of Villages Map

The City of Villages map graphically identifies potential village opportunity areas throughout the City. The map has been prepared for the purpose of environmental analysis. If adopted, it does not replace the land use maps included in each community plan. Ultimately, communities will recommend where villages should occur in their communities through a community plan amendment/update process. A generalized version of the map is included in the Strategic Framework Element to provide direction for amendments and updates of community plans. Community planning groups, MTDB, development and planning professionals, and citizen subcommittee members assisted in the development of the village types and locations indicated on the map. The precise boundaries, specific mix of uses, specific density and intensity ranges, and the amount and definition of required public or civic space within proposed village areas will be determined through the community plan amendment process.

Village Types

Although the term “village” is used as a unifying concept, specific types of villages were developed to further define the general development parameters of an area. These village types include both new target growth areas as well as areas already designated for growth in existing community plans which could redevelop with a village design. They loosely define associated land use characteristics and residential densities while identifying potential opportunity areas where further study should occur.

The proposed land use categories include:

Regional Center (Downtown) - The Centre City community plan area has a unique role to play in the 21st century development of the City and County of San Diego. Downtown has remained the administrative and legal center to San Diego County and has recently reemerged as the most important cultural, and entertainment center in the region. Development of the Gaslamp Quarter and San Diego Convention Center has resulted in Downtown becoming an increasingly important destination for visitors to this region. The

Downtown ballpark currently under construction and the future Central Library would only add to the Downtown attraction. The proposed City of Villages strategy encourages the further intensification of downtown to increase its role as a regional hub. An important goal is for Downtown to enhance its role as the pre-eminent business center in this region and intensify its emergence as major urban residential center with higher density residential uses and mixed-use development.

Downtown currently offers more convenient and extensive transit connections than any other location throughout the region and contains a larger and more exciting pedestrian-oriented area than any other location. The area is expected to remain unique in the scope and variety of services available to pedestrians and transit riders. Downtown's unique attributes should be capitalized on to create the largest concentration of medium to high density housing in the region and a much expanded office district. Downtown would continue to be our administrative, business, cultural and institutional center.

Subregional District - The proposed Subregional District is a major employment and/or commercial district within the region containing corporate or multiple-use office, industrial, and retail uses with some adjacent multifamily residential uses. Some of the potential higher densities and employment intensities in the City could occur in these areas. In all of the districts, there is a permitted increase in employment intensity. Existing Subregional Districts include the Mission Valley and North University City areas. Emerging districts include Otay Mesa, Midway/Pacific Highway, Kearny Mesa, and Sorrento Mesa/Sorrento Valley. Where appropriate, the collocation of medium to high-density residential uses with employment uses could occur. The proposed Subregional districts would include more focused high density/intensity growth areas known as Urban Village Centers.

Urban Village Centers - The proposed Urban Village Centers are focused areas or transit hubs within Subregional Districts with a mix of more intensive employment, residential, regional and subregional commercial uses. The village center would have public gathering spaces and civic uses. The clustering of uses would maximize walkability and support transit. The Urban Village Centers would range in size and could support medium to high-density residential uses as identified on the City of Villages Map.

University Towne Center and the higher density development surrounding it are an example of an existing Urban Village Center.

Neighborhood Village Centers - Neighborhood Village Centers are proposed in most communities. They are neighborhood or community-oriented areas with local commercial, office, and multifamily residential uses that could include some commercial buildings with second floor office uses or residences. They would be required to contain public gathering spaces and/or civic uses. The clustering of uses maximizes walkability and supports transit. Neighborhood Village Centers are expected to range in size from approximately 3 acres in the most urbanized portions of the City to over 100 acres in vacant or redevelopable newer

areas. Most villages could support a medium to medium-high range of densities in a variety of building types. These residential densities would apply to that portion of the site developed as residential or mixed-use.

Residential density and intensity varies according to each center's size, location, surrounding community character, and availability of public facilities, particularly transit. The Uptown District in Hillcrest, at about 45 dwelling units per acre on the residential portion, and downtown La Jolla are examples of existing neighborhood village centers. Many of the proposed Neighborhood Centers are expected to be located on greyfields, (i.e. aging and underutilized shopping centers and/or strip malls).

Transit Corridors - The City contains a significant number of existing commercial corridors in urbanized communities that offer reuse potential and could provide important linkages between village centers. Some of these corridors are "main streets" in that they are lively and vital, pedestrian-friendly, and home to a rich variety of small business and restaurants. However, in some cases, these corridors are unsightly strip commercial districts struggling to compete with more upscale centers. These corridors could be redeveloped or revitalized through subsequent plan designations and zoning that permit a higher intensity of mixed-use, residential/commercial development and employment or multiple uses which retain commercial uses or convert to higher density residential development.

The applicable density ranges would be medium to high-density residential uses. The increased residential densities can assist the City in meeting our housing goals, in addition to providing a built-in population base to support the local street level businesses and encouraged to use the expanded transit system. A high level of transit service and a variety of streetscape improvements would characterize corridors.

Existing and Future Villages and Transit Corridors - Existing and future village areas and corridors are not currently proposed for intensification, but have development capacity and design guidelines in their existing community plans which would allow them to develop more fully into villages and transit corridors. These areas could increase in density/intensity after 2020 due to a variety of factors such as availability of transit, development phasing, and availability of infrastructure. These areas also include expansions to areas adjacent to Urban Village Centers, Neighborhood Village Centers, and Transit Corridors where development will most likely occur after the adjacent village develops. The existing corridors are currently zoned for mixed-use; the implementation of the proposed City of Villages may place a requirement such that the planned/zoned residential densities are realized. These areas are identified on the map for informational purposes only and were not included in the environmental analysis.

Figure 2
City of Villages Map
Northern Area

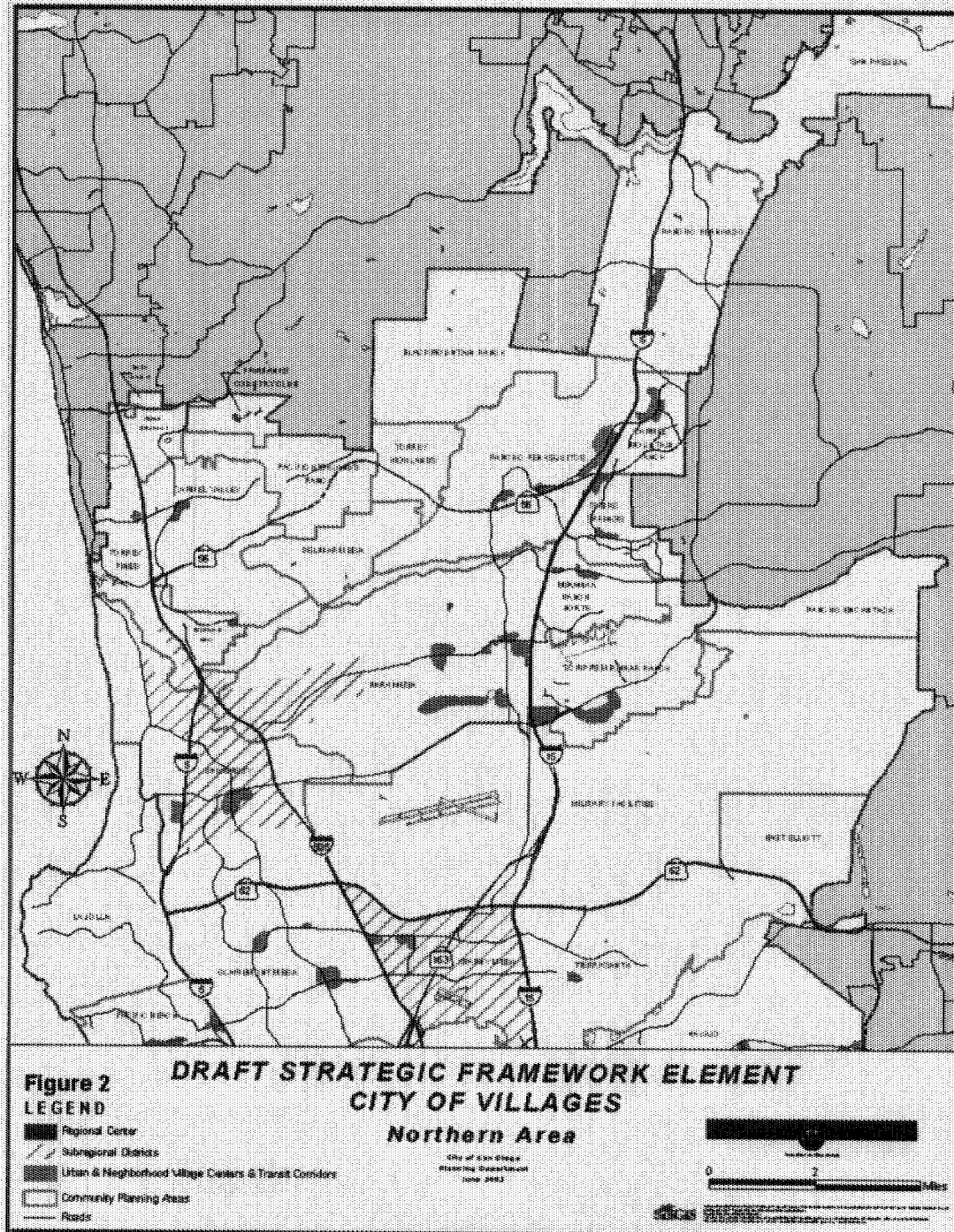


Figure 3
City of Villages Map
Central Area

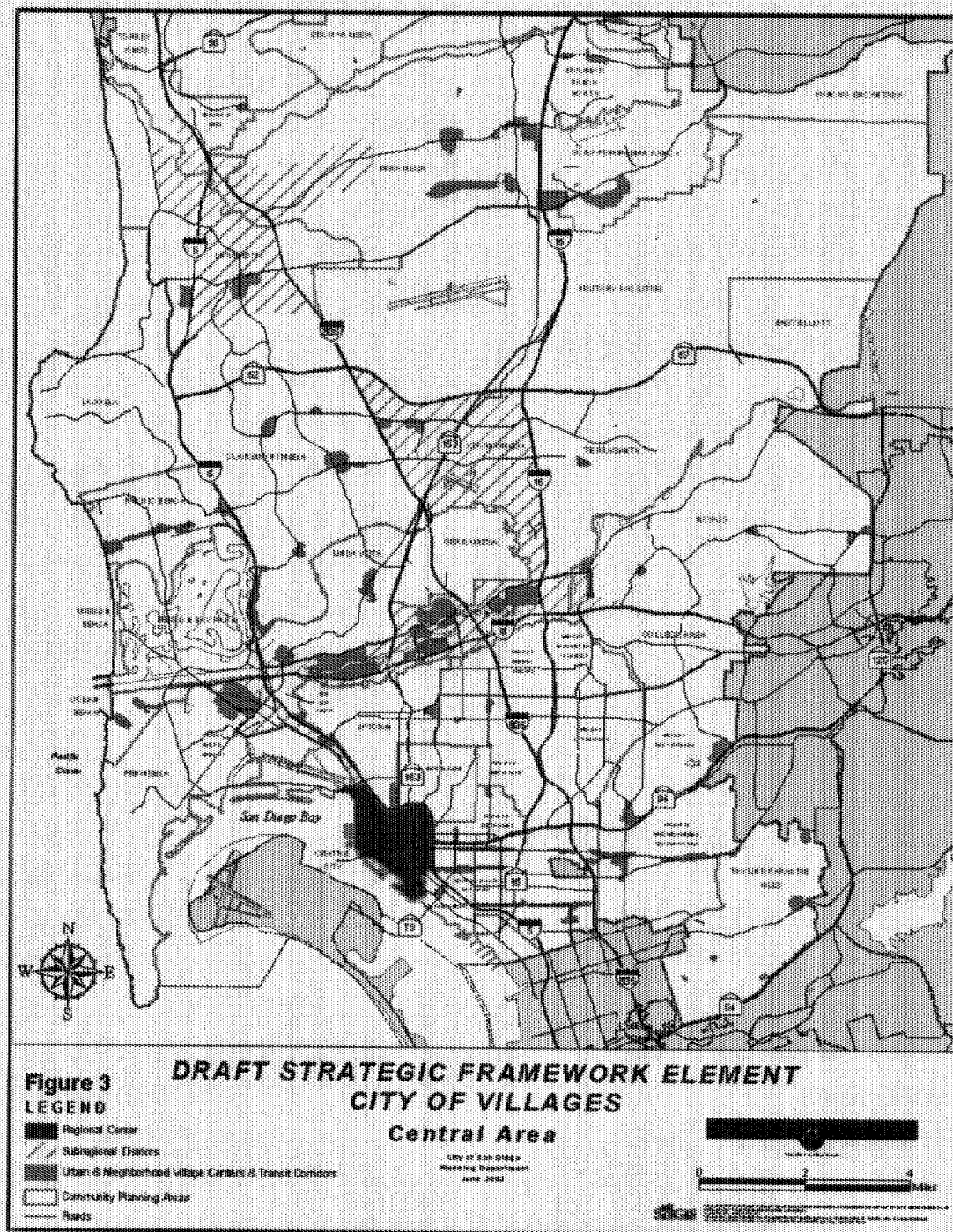
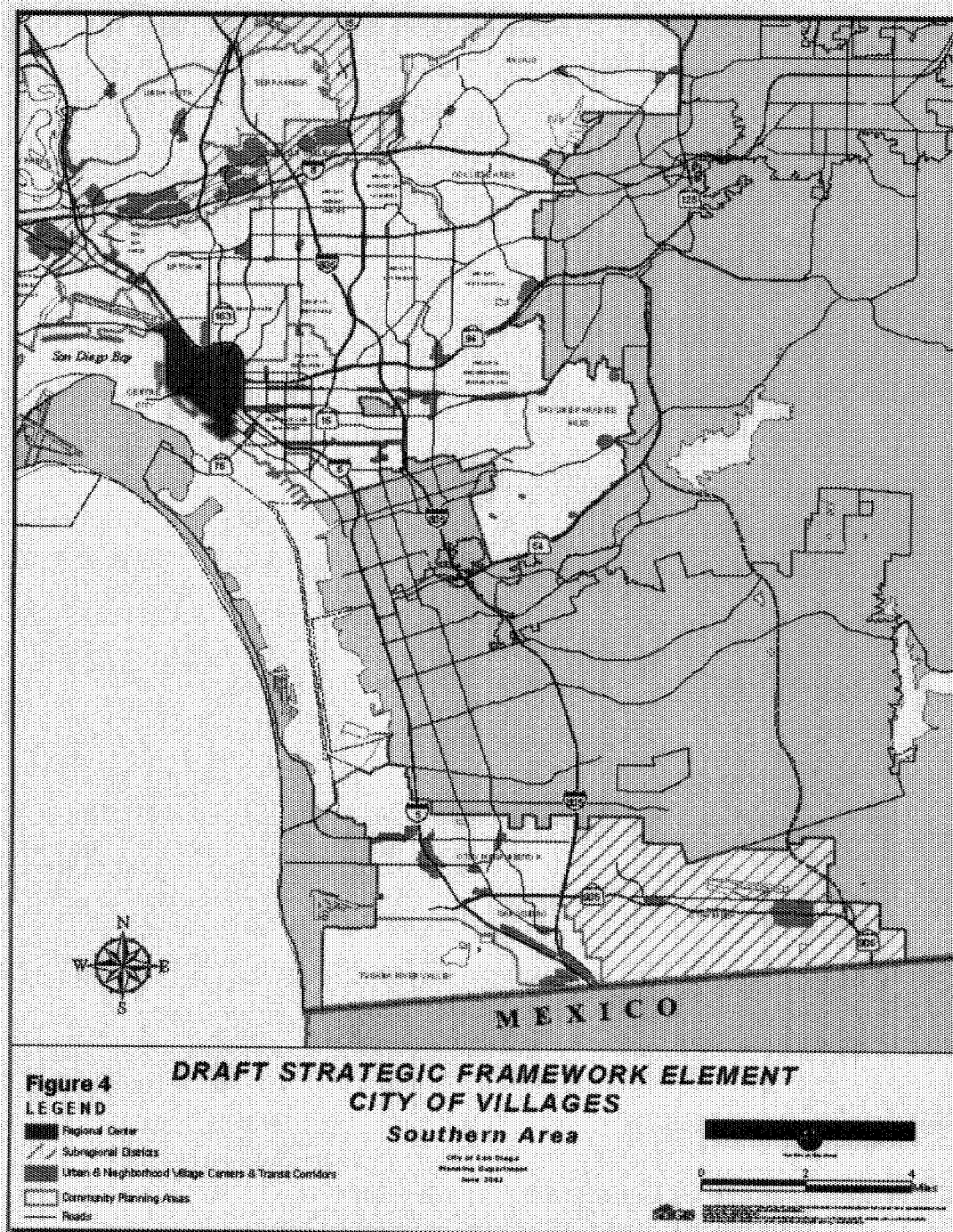


Figure 4
City of Villages Map
Southern Area



A Comprehensive Strategy

The proposed City of Villages Strategy represents a comprehensive approach to growth and development. Seven interrelated issues were identified. These issues, the following accompanying policies, and proposed Strategic Framework Five-Year Action Plan. (the strategies described to implement them) will guide the subsequent comprehensive update to the general plan and associated phased, individual community plan amendments/updates.

Urban Form and the Environment - Subsequent new development/redevelopment will respect the City's natural features and open spaces. Natural and built linkages will be enhanced to connect neighborhood and urban centers throughout the City, define neighborhood edges, and provide strong ties to our natural environment. Proposed neighborhood and urban centers will include public gathering places, walkable tree-lined streets, affordable housing, opportunities for art and culture, and quality education facilities. Joint use planning will be encouraged to maximize proposed public infrastructure improvements. Greater attention to neighborhood safety and balanced street design will also be addressed.

Historic Preservation - Historic resources will be addressed in a comprehensive manner and will be incorporated into many of the proposed urban villages which may develop in older neighborhoods. Historic resources are expected to play a major role when revitalizing older areas of the City. Subsequent village design and development, therefore would preserve those historic resources which have been identified as being significant through local, state, or federal historic designation or by less formal identification in community plans, historic surveys, and/or CEQA environmental review process.

Economic Prosperity - Proposed Subregional Districts and Urban Centers will provide the land area, zoning regulations, and infrastructure needed to support business development which offers a variety of employment opportunities. Economic prosperity policies include those which promote business expansion, middle-income jobs, and efficient use of employment land.

Infrastructure/Public Facilities - The provision of adequate infrastructure and public facilities is a key component for the entire proposed growth strategy. New funding sources, reallocation of existing resources, and adjustments to certain facilities standards are all part of the proposed strategy for accommodating new growth and remedying existing deficiencies. Joint use planning to maximize public infrastructure investments is also part of the strategy. This also means better integration of public schools into the neighborhood's social and physical environments. Greater attention to neighborhood safety and balanced street design goals will also be addressed through a revised Street Design Manual (to be considered by the City Council in Summer 2002) and implementation of crime prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) measures.

Conservation -The proposed strategy will be subsequently applied in a manner which will support a stable, diverse and equitable economy; protect/enhance the quality of the air, water, land and other natural resources; conserve native vegetation and wildlife habitat.

Mobility - While the proposed villages are intended to have a variety of uses and services which would meet the daily transportation needs of the people living and working in and around them, villages are not expected to be self-sufficient enclaves. San Diego's more densely populated and intensely developed Neighborhoods and Urban Centers and Corridors would be linked to each other and to regional-subregional centers through high quality, rapid transit services on an expanded network of varying transit modes. The goal is to create a world-class transit system that is competitive in ease of use, comfort, and travel times with personal automobile use. Increased transit accessibility also relies upon improving walkability and bicycle-friendliness within and surrounding the proposed villages.

Housing Affordability - Affordable or "workforce" housing is critically needed in the City to meet social equity and economic prosperity goals. The goal is to increase the supply, diversity, and geographic balance of affordable housing in the City and region.

Economic Prosperity and Regionalism - The potential Subregional Districts and Urban Village Centers would play an important role in the City's economic prosperity strategies. With subsequent discretionary actions, these areas are expected to provide the land area, zoning regulations, and infrastructure needed to support business development and a variety of employment opportunities. The proposed City of Villages strategy is intended to complement and support growth management in effect elsewhere throughout the greater San Diego region. The City continues to work closely with regional planning agencies including San Diego association of Governments (SANDAG), Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB), and the San Diego Unified Port District. The City's proposed strategy of encouraging growth near transit nodes and corridors, and increasing residential and employment concentrations in areas with the best transit connections to major activity centers throughout the City as well as the region should continue to support the Transit First Plan, and the Regional Transit Vision which incorporates the Transit First network into a regionwide plan..

Proposed Strategic Framework Five-Year Action Plan

The Strategic Framework Five-Year Action Plan is the implementation program for updating the *Progress Guide and General Plan* to include the Strategic Framework Element and executing the City of Villages growth strategy. The Five-Year Action Plan is a separate document that sets the City's growth strategy in motion following adoption of the Strategic Framework Element by the City Council. Overall, the Action Plan identifies the following:

- ACTIONS to be taken;

-
- POTENTIAL PARTNERS who will work on these actions;
 - HIGH PRIORITY actions for implementation;
 - AVAILABILITY OF STAFF RESOURCES to pursue these actions, and;
 - DEPARTMENT responsible for ensuring that these actions are successfully carried out, and
 - MONITORING of Action Plan implementation.

Draft Strategic Framework Action Plan

The draft Action Plan contains nine goal areas that implement the policy recommendations of the Strategic Framework Element as follows: Urban Form, Neighborhood Quality, Public Facilities, Conservation and the Environment, Mobility and Walkable Communities, Housing Affordability, Economic Prosperity and Regionalism, Equitable Development, and City of Villages Development. Below is a summary of the major recommended actions for each goal area.

Urban Form – Identify centers on the City of Villages Map; update the Urban Design Element of the General Plan to address Transit First design concepts, street design, big box and super center design, public spaces, and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles; develop Community Identify Elements for community plans to highlight and protect the natural forms and environmental resources of neighborhoods/communities; and amend Environmentally Sensitive Lands regulations as needed.

Neighborhood Quality – Promote distinctive neighborhoods through land use plans and current projects, tailored design guidelines, neighborhood signs, and landmarks; maximize the opportunities for community-oriented public spaces; maintain the historic fabric of neighborhoods through survey and designation, zoning, community plan designations, and design guidelines; promote safe and secure neighborhoods through CPTED measures; improve the quality of infill development through building code changes and new partnerships; design schools so they function as centers for community activities; and develop General Plan policies to address Arts and Culture.

Public Facilities and Services – Develop a financing strategy; update the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan; expand community plan facilities elements to provide policy direction on the desired character, prioritization, and mix of community facilities; update the Recreation Element of the General Plan to develop a Park Master Plan and expand options for how communities can meet park and recreation standards; and expand applications of existing mechanisms to fund infrastructure, including impact fee programs.

Conservation and the Environment – Adopt a Conservation Element of the General Plan to address resource protection, pollution prevention, energy conservation, storm water runoff, land development, environmental equity, and education policies; develop energy conservation, supply, and efficiency programs; work toward citywide development of

energy efficient “green buildings,” implement storm water and urban runoff prevention policies; create and sponsor environmental education efforts; protect topographic and open space resources; increase efforts to conserve renewable and non-renewable resources; and work with other agencies to improve air quality.

Mobility and Walkable Communities – Adopt a Mobility Element of the General Plan to incorporate the Transit First network of projects, coordinate policies and projects with the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan, and improve the pedestrian environment; revise and implement the City’s Street Design Manual to improve the pedestrian environment and provide incentives for an interconnected street system; design new neighborhoods and modify the existing street network to better support walking, transit, and bicycling; mix land uses to create walkable destinations; design buildings to create an active streetscape; and amend grading regulations to require convenient pedestrian access points from new development to adjacent uses and streets.

Housing Affordability– Increase funding for affordable housing; form partnerships to further affordable housing goals; increase the overall supply of housing through appropriate land development regulations and permit processing procedures; and improve housing affordability throughout the City.

Economic Prosperity and Regionalism – Adopt an Economic Prosperity Element of the General Plan that contains coordinated and comprehensive economic prosperity goals, objectives, and implementation measures; amend community plans to intensify employment uses in Subregional Districts and Urban Centers and designate transit corridors where employment uses should be emphasized; monitor implementation of the Land Development Code and propose additional amendments if needed to intensify employment uses and provide flexibility for business expansion; adopt living wage legislation; consider the economic and fiscal impacts of projects; increase international trade; and encourage equitable access to educational opportunities.

Equitable Development – Village or other long-range plans should promote equitable development, avoid the displacement of existing residents, and preserve desired neighborhood character through neighborhood-specific strategies.

City of Villages Development – Require application of elements of the TOD Guidelines as an interim implementation measure; designate mixed-use village sites and prepare master plans through community plan amendments; amend the Land Development Code, as necessary to achieve City of Villages goals; evaluate Council Policies for consistency with the Strategic Framework Element; create a Land Use Element of the General Plan to clarify the role of the community plans as a part of the General Plan; develop a phasing proposal; pursue implementation of pilot villages, MTDB Showcase Projects, and a model urban school; increase community outreach; and work with lending institutions to facilitate financing of mixed-use development.

The Action Plan also includes the City of Villages Implementation Monitoring Plan which will measure progress toward attainment of 2020 Housing Goals by Community Plan Area; Implementation of Action Items; and relevant “Sustainable Community Program Indicators.”

B. Discretionary Actions

The discretionary action needed to begin to implement the proposed City of Villages, Strategic Framework Element, is the City Council adoption of the proposed Strategic Framework Element for inclusion in the City’s *Progress Guide and General Plan* and the Strategic Framework Five-Year Action Plan and the placement of the TOD guidelines over the potential village center sites identified on the Fourth Revised Version of the City of Villages map. This project would be initially considered at a public hearing of the Planning Commission. Recommendations of the Planning Commission will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration, a final decision to adopt the Strategic Framework Element, and for certification of the EIR.